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EDITORIAL

The highest head gets the brick. The truth of this old adage is likely to be felt by the English teacher in the next decade. In the general readjustment of school curricula which is now well under way, the "scientific educator" is having much to say, and he evinces in some quarters little respect for the arts and less understanding of them. To him English is a "formal" subject; for real meat you must turn to the natural and social sciences. Not that these sciences have proved in the past of extraordinary value to schoolboys, but that they are going to.

There is some truth in the contention that English is merely a formal subject. It is too often treated as though it were. In composition, technique is put first and "exercises" to drill it in caused to follow, while genuine social situations for communication are neglected. In literature, likewise, the impression is too often given that novels should be read in order to discover which of a stated number of methods of characterization are employed, what "point of view" is assumed, and so on. Such knowledge is of course not dangerous, but it must always be of subsidiary interest to any but the specialist. The best way to meet the attacks of the unsympathetic is to make sure that there is no justice whatever in their complaints.

Has your school or your town ever had a dramatic performance, or a May fête, or a civic festival of any kind? If not, why not have one this year and make it a Shakespeare festival? Or, if you have had festivals before, why not make this one surpass anything of the sort that was ever offered? If your town is large enough, why not unite in the Shakespeare commemoration all the activities of all schools, school organizations, clubs, and social and civic organizations of every class? Why not devote the whole of some pleasant spring day, including the evening—not necessarily April 23, as that in some localities might be too

early in the season, but some day in April, or May, or even June—to a Shakespearean pageant and Shakespearean merry-making? The streets might be filled with Shakespearean characters in costume during the whole of this to-be-memorable day; the morning might be given to a grand parade, the afternoon to a pageant, out-of-door sports, and folk dances, and the evening to the out-of-door presentation of a Shakespearean play. If the town is not large enough to admit of carrying through an entertainment on so large a scale, some part of this general plan might be appropriate. By all means have a play out of doors or indoors, and have Shakespeare himself and all his characters, in costume, in evidence all day long. The expense of the festival, to be held indoors or out, might be met by the preliminary sale of tags, obviating the necessity of having gates, ticket-takers, and admission fees on the day itself.

At the present time, the United States seems to be the only country on earth in a position to do fitting honor to the occasion; and this is an additional reason, if additional reason is needed, why the matter should be of importance as well as interest to all lovers of world-literature, and to all who would make the spirit of brotherhood the world-spirit. The initiative in every instance properly lies with schools and teachers; and to exercise it is more than a privilege. Is it not really a duty? Whether you can do less or more, you can do something that will not require too great effort, that will be a pleasure to you and all concerned, and a worthy contribution to a high purpose: in these days of horror to unite in honor of noble ideals.